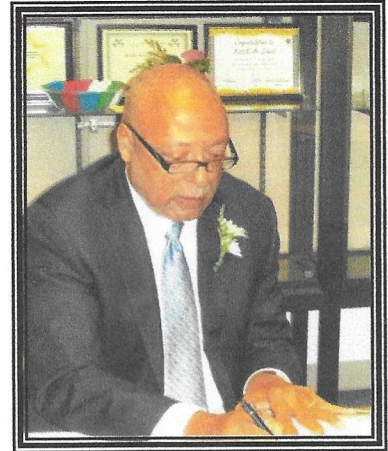


2014

Distinguished Pattillo Alumni

(Posthumously)



Christopher Rudolph Knight was born May 2, 1947, the son of the late Christopher Columbus and Jetta Howard Knight. At age seven, Rudolph and his mother joined his father, a career U.S. Army paratrooper, at the newly integrated Ft. Campbell (KY) base. This was followed by sojourns at Ft. Benning (GA) and Ft. Bragg (NC). At age fourteen, he and his mother returned to Tarboro.

After graduating with honors from the W. A. Pattillo High School in 1965, Rudolph attended North Carolina Central University where he earned a BS degree in Business Administration in 1969. Following graduation from North Carolina Central University, he accepted a position with Edgecombe Community College where he was the school's first professional level African American employee. He taught business courses for seven years and was then the Director of Continuing Education for 21 years before retiring in 1997. During these years he continued his education, earning Master of Science degrees in Education Administration, Library Science, and Adult Education from East Carolina University. After working briefly for the Weldon City Schools, Rudolph enjoyed being the Historic Preservation Planner for the City of Rocky Mount for nine years before his "final" retirement in 2011.

Family and friends knew Rudolph to be kind, caring, loving, sensitive, and generous. Always quick to react to any perceived wrong or injustice, he returned respect for respect. Rudolph was the guru of Edgecombe County African American history who co-authored three books with his partner, Dr. Lawrence Auld. These were 1) *From Water Street to East Tarboro*, Keechtown, and *The Depot: Tarboro African American Neighborhoods* (2010); 2) *The Education of a Generation: The Rosenwald Schools and Other African-American Schools in Edgecombe County, A Preliminary History* (2012); and 3) *African American Heritage Guide: Tarboro, Rocky Mount, Edgecombe County* (November 2013). From 2003-2013 he wrote a column on local African American history for *The Daily Southerner*. Those columns sometimes involved Knight's detail research that discredited historic information that had been told for years. He also contributed to *Welcome to Tarboro Homes* magazine and the *Rocky Mount Telegram*.

Another significant feat Knight was proud of was the Perry-Weston Historical, Cultural, and Educational Institute, that was organized in 2008 by him, Dr. Florence Armstrong and Auld. The purpose of the organization lined up with his passion to promote African American history, genealogy, culture, and arts, in Edgecombe County and North Carolina.

A member of several community organizations, Rudolph was an instrument of change and progress in the W. A. Pattillo High School National Alumni Association, Incorporated. In his position as Chairperson of the Archives Committee of the Association - a historian extraordinaire - he not only studied and wrote about the organization's past but made it relevant to our today. The members of the W. A. Pattillo High School National Alumni Association, Incorporated, recognize our Alumnus, Christopher Rudolph Knight for his faithful and dedicated service to the organization and its purposes.